3 Air Passenger Baggage

AQIM Handbook

Contents

Background

The arrival of international passengers by air has increased significantly in the past decade. The various agricultural items that air passengers can potentially carry is staggering. These items can pose a significant pest and exotic disease risk to agriculture in the United States.

The pathway "Air Passenger Baggage" encompasses all aspects of baggage movement into the United States by way of various aircraft (passenger, charter, corporate, private, etc.). AQIM randomly samples air passenger baggage to determine this pathway's potential threat to agriculture.

Each work location will randomly sample air passenger baggage arriving at that location. The data collected from the random sampling will help to answer the following questions:

1. What is the threat of agricultural pests approaching the work location?
2. How effective is the AQI program at managing this threat?

The origin and destination of the passenger is important to determine risk levels. Just as important is whether the baggage carried by the passenger carries an agriculture pest.

While each work location will have differing rates of quantity of passengers, the same criteria for sampling will apply to all work locations. Through consistent random sampling a depiction of the pest threat of air passenger baggage movement will emerge. Combined data from all work locations will help determine the pest risk for baggage carried by the universe of air passengers.

Monitoring of air passenger baggage is an ongoing function and is an integral part of the AQI program. The ongoing sampling of air passenger baggage will allow work locations to adjust their selection criteria for the present and the future. Monitoring helps measure how well PPQ accomplishes its mission of pest and exotic disease exclusion.

Pathway Monitoring Maintenance

Port managers and local AQIM coordinators are responsible for ensuring that monitoring activities are being performed properly. To help with reviewing the status of monitoring activities, refer to **Appendix L—Pathway Monitoring Maintenance**. This appendix contains a checklist of questions port managers and local AQIM coordinators should periodically answer to ensure proper monitoring of each designated pathway at their work stations. See **Figure E-1**. The questions review the following topics:

- Random sampling
- Proportional sampling
- Adequate sampling
- Accurate and complete data
- Working risk committees
- Local support

Air Passenger Baggage Worksheet

There is one worksheet for recording information gathered from your inspection of air passenger baggage for the purpose of AQIM. The form is available as a fillable form at:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/manuals/port/pdf_files/AQIM_in_PDF/Air_Passenger_Baggage.pdf

Agriculture Quarantine Activity Systems (AQAS) User Guide For Data Entry

General Instructions

The data collected must be entered into the AQAS database. This is a web-based program and is accessible from any USDA APHIS or DHS CBP computer. The web address is:

https://mokcs14.aphis.usda.gov/aqas/login.jsp.

A user name and password is required to enter data. This can be obtained by contacting your immediate supervisor.

Data Analysis: Survey Results and How To Use Them

AQIM activities have been put into place to develop baseline data to help answer two basic questions:

1. What is the threat of agricultural pests approaching work locations?
2. How effective is the AQI program at managing this threat?

Preliminary results for air passenger surveys provide a general answer for Question 1. That is, there are varying rates at which prohibited agricultural materials approach work locations. These prohibited agricultural materials are what could have agricultural pests. Surveys show that at some work locations about 2 percent of the passengers carried prohibited items in the past year. At other work locations, surveys show that passengers are carrying prohibited items at a higher rate, sometimes near 10 percent.

These percentages are a rough approximation of agricultural pest threat. Further analysis of the monitoring data is needed to determine the risk associated with the prohibited items approaching the work location. The origin and destination of the prohibited items are important to determine risk levels. Also, whether or not the prohibited item carries an actual agricultural pest is analyzing risk.

Analyses of the monitoring data need to occur at several levels of PPQ. At the work locations, PPQ personnel need to study what the data means and answer the first question for their specific location. Analysis tools are available to help with these analyses, which are explained in the next subsection. At the same time, PPQ holds risk analysis workshops around the country to introduce risk analysis concepts. At some work locations, teams of PPQ officers and managers form Risk Management Teams to look at monitoring data and other data, which are normally collected at the location.

At other locations, analyses of monitoring data occur to establish rates at which quarantine items and agricultural pests are approaching the borders of States, areas of the country, and the United States.

Once baseline rates are well established, PPQ can use the monitoring data as a baseline to answer the second basic question: How effective is the AQI program at managing the risk of introduction of agricultural

pests and diseases? Again, each work location must conduct this type of analysis. AQIM provides a framework which work locations can use to carry out the analysis.

Questions to Guide Data Analysis

1. How many declarations were selected for sampling during the survey period?

   How many declarations sampled required an action (seizure or other action required as a condition of entry) during the survey period?

   What is the action approach rate of declarations requiring action (number of declarations, with one or more items categorized as seized or clean/treatment, divided by the total number of declarations sampled)?

   How many passengers were represented by all declarations sampled?

   How many seizures (QMIs) came from the samples?

   What is the QMI approach rate of passengers with prohibited agricultural material (total number of QMIs divided by total passengers sampled during the survey period)?

2. How many pest interceptions (actionable pests) were made from survey samples?

   Pest Approach Rate: What is the rate of pest interceptions in relation to number of passengers (number of actionable pests divided by number of passengers in the sample)?

3. How many QMIs were plant material? Meat or animal products?

   What is the rate of QMIs for plant material and meat/animal products?

   DISCUSSION:

   Is there a greater risk from plant material or animal products at the work location?

4. Generate a list of all the origins of passengers transiting the work location. Produced a list of origins of passengers **with QMIs** transiting the work location?

   DISCUSSION:

Which countries of origin have a higher rate of QMIs than passengers? Have these countries always been recognized as high risk countries at the work location? (Example: 10 percent of all passengers surveyed were from Italy. Passengers from Italy were responsible for 20 percent of the QMIs seized. Passengers from Italy carried double the amount of QMIs expected as based on the volume of passengers from that country.)

5. Generate a list of the destinations of passengers transiting the work location. What are the top five destinations of passengers? What are the top five destinations of passengers **with QMIs**?

   DISCUSSION:

   Which States are considered high risk States?

6. What is the action approach rate for each month of the survey period?

   DISCUSSION:

   Do these monthly rates correlate with traditional peak and off-peak travel times?

   Are there easily identified trends when the rate of QMIs transiting the work location are higher?

   Are there seasonal trends or do higher rates correlate with national or religious holidays, beginning or end of the school year, vacation periods, etc.?

7. Generate a listing and frequency of items seized. What are the top five most frequently seized items? Which QMI items present the greater risk?

8. Generate a list of flights.

   Which flights were most likely carrying passengers with QMIs (top five flights)? Where were seized items found--hand carried bags or checked luggage? Did the passenger declare all prohibited items? Was the passenger traveling alone, as a couple, or family? What was the reason for travel--business, vacation, visit family, tour group, school? What is the passenger's citizenship and residency?

   DISCUSSION:

   What selectivity factors are currently used to identify passengers likely to carry prohibited agricultural items? How do these factors compare with survey results?

What additional selectivity factors would be useful to identify passengers carrying prohibited items?

What percentage of resources are dedicated to staffing AQI activities for air passenger at the work location?

What is the relative risk of air passenger compared with other pathways in the work location?

Should resources be reallocated among all the pathways in the work location to better address the relative risk of the pathways?

9. Apply the survey results to the total passenger population to estimate the number of QMIs and interceptions likely to transit the work location during the survey period.

How many (total) passengers/crew arrived at the airport during the survey period? Using WADS data and using the QMI approach rate and rate of pest interceptions on QMIs, calculate estimates of the number of QMIs and actionable pests transiting the work location.

DISCUSSION:

How does the estimated number of QMIs compare with the reported number of QMIs on WADS?

What percentage of all QMIs transiting the work location were seized as a result of the AQI program?

How does the estimated number of actionable pest interceptions compare with the reported number of actionable pests on WADS?